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## WHAT MATHEMATICAL SUBJECTS SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE CURRICULUM OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS.\*

BY CHARLES L. MCKEEHAN,  
of the Philadelphia Bar.

The President of your Association has asked me to discuss this subject from the point of view of the professions. Surely a daring undertaking for one who knows nothing about mathematics except the simplest operations in integers and fractions, who knows as an abstract proposition that two and two make four, but who frequently finds that they make three or five to him when he adds them in a column of figures, and (to come closer to the point) who never did really understand the principles of mathematics, although he graduated from a famous preparatory school and escaped from the university of Pennsylvania with a bachelor's degree.

In a delightful little Scotch play now being presented in Philadelphia, there is a scene in which a Scottish lad of about fifteen years is seen in his father's home on Sunday morning wrestling with the Shorter Catechism, with expression ranging from puzzled, hazy wonder, through irritation, indignation and distraction to blank despair. He mumbles half aloud "purification, justification, sanctification," and then bursts out with "Faither, I can't understand it!" The stern old Scotchman flashes back "Who's expectin' ye to understand it? *Learn it!*" I do not mean to attribute any such unreasonable attitude to the present day teachers of mathematics, and yet I believe that this scene as a whole brings back to most men a vivid memory of their boyhood struggles with mathematics.

*(To be continued)*

\* Paper read before the Association of Teachers of Mathematics in the Middle States and Maryland.